

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DEAE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 IO-13
JUSE-00 NSAE-00 CTME-00 SNM-05 TRSE-00 ICA-11
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FM AMCONSUL CURACAO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4019

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C O N F I D E N T I A L CURACAO 0605

CARACAS FOR SAIC

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR, NA

SUBJECT: U.S. COAST GUARD EFFORTS TO SUPPRESS DRUG TRAFFICKING

REF: (A) STATE 201357 (B) STATE 128500

(C) STATE 130190 (D) CURACAO 280

SUMMARY USCG'S MARITIME DRUG INTERDICTION PROGRAM EXPLAINED TO MINISTER OF JUSTICE LEO CHANCE ON AUG. 22. CHANCE APPEARED WILLING TO COOPERATE IN GRANTING AUTHORIZATION FOR BOARDING OF AND LAW ENFORCEMENT ACTION AGAINST NETHERLANDS ANTILLES' (NA) VESSELS. HOWEVER, HE REQUESTED WRITTEN SUMMARY OF PROGRAM AND PROPOSALS FOR SUBMISSION TO ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR CLARIFICATION OF POTENTIAL LEGAL DIFFICULTIES RESULTING FROM US BOARDING OR SIEZURE OF NA VESSELS. AFTER MY PRESENTATION, CHANCE ANNOUNCED PLANNED TRIP TO US FOR INSPECTION OF PATROL CRAFT AND VISITS WITH DRUG ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS IN WASHINGTON DURING WEEK OF SEPT. 4. CHANCE AGAIN PRESENTED ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT OF CONTINUING REQUEST FOR USG ASSISTANCE IN OBTAINING PATROL CRAFT, CREW TRAINING AND INITIATION OF NAG'S OWN MARITIME DRUG INTERDICTION PROGRAM. END SUMMARY
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1. CHANCE LISTENED POLITELY TO MY DISCUSSION OF USCG'S MARITIME DRUG INTERDICTION PROGRAM AND OF THE NEED FOR AD HOC ARRANGEMENT TO OBTAIN AUTHORIZATION FOR ACTION AGAINST NA VESSELS. CHANCE INDICATED HE WOULD BE WILLING TO PROVIDE AUTHORIZATION AND WOULD BE INTERESTED IN PROSECUTING ANY NA CREWMEN DEPORTED HERE BUT STATED THAT BEFORE ESTABLISHING ANY ARRANGEMENTS HE

WANTED TO EXPLORE POTENTIAL CONFLICTS WITH NA LAW. WRITTEN SUMMARY OF PROGRAM EMPHASIZING POTENTIAL USCG ACTION ON BEHALF OF NAG AGAINST NA VESSELS SUBMITTED FOR ATTORNEY GENERAL'S CONSIDERATION. I HAD PREVIOUSLY BRIEFED ATTORNEY GENERAL ON THESE MATTERS IN EARLY JUNE AND WILL ATTEMPT TO OBTAIN INFORMAL READING OF PROBABLE NAG RESPONSE FROM HIM. GIVEN CHANCE'S TRAVEL PLANS, I DO NOT EXPECT FORMAL REPLY BEFORE OCTOBER.

2. TIMING OF USG'S REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE COULD NOT HAVE BEEN BETTER FROM CHANCE'S POINT OF VIEW. IT GAVE HIM THE OPPORTUNITY TO REITERATE HIS REQUEST FOR USG ASSISTANCE IN OBTAINING PATROL CRAFT FOR NA AND TO ANNOUNCE HIS UPCOMING TRIP TO US. CHANCE NOTED STRONG SIMILARITIES IN CONCEPT OF USCG OPERATIONS AND PROPOSED NA PATROL BOAT PROGRAM. HE STATED HE FELT MORALLY OBLIGATED TO INTERDICT DRUG FLOW THROUGH NA TO US BUT WONDERED IF WAS NOT REALLY IN US INTEREST TO ASSIST. GREAT PERCENTAGE OF DRUGS ENTERING NA DO NOT REMAIN HERE BUT CONTINUE ON TO THEIR FINAL DESTINATION IN THE US. HE POINTED OUT THAT NA CUSTOMS AND POLICE HAVE MADE GREAT STRIDES IN DRUG INTERDICTION AT CONTROLLED PORTS OF ENTRY BUT THAT, WITHOUT PATROL BOATS, EXTENSIVE UNCONTROLLED COAST LINE PROVIDES DRUG TRAFFICKERS EASY ACCESS TO ISLANDS OF NA. CHANCE STILL MAINTAINS STRONG HOPES FOR USG ASSISTANCE BUT STATED THAT EVEN WITHOUT ASSIS- TANCE PROGRAM WOULD BE IMPLEMENTED, ALTHOUGH ON A MORE LIMITED SCALE.

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3. CHANCE HAS DEVELOPED PATROL BOAT PROGRAM PROPOSALS SINCE LAST DISCUSSED WITH CONGEN AND DEA PERSONNEL IN MARCH AND JUNE. BOAT CREWS WOULD BE NA CUSTOMS AND POLICE MIXTURE WITH FOUR BOATS INVOLVED, (2 IN CURACAO, 1 IN ARUBA AND 1 IN ST. MAARTEN). MORE COMPLETE DRUG INTELLIGENCE STATISTICS REQUESTED BY DEA FORWARDED TO SAIC CARACAS UNDER SEPERATE COVER.

4. CHANCE PLANS TRAVEL TO MIAMI SEPT. 3 IN COMPANY OF HEAD COMMISSIONER OF POLICE OLDENBOOM AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT OFFICER HARRIS. INSPECTION OF VARIOUS PATROL CRAFT ON SEPT. 4 PRESUM- ABLY ARRANGED BY OLDENBOOM. CHANCE WILL ARRIVE WASHINGTON EVENING OF SEPT. 4 TO BE AVAILABLE FOR MEETINGS WITH DRUG ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS ON SEPT. 5 AND 6. (IF SCHEDULING REQUIRES, HE WOULD REMAIN THROUGH SEPT. 9.) HE APPARENTLY HAS MEETING WITH DEA ADMINISTRATOR BENSINGER ON 5TH OR 6TH PREVIOUSLY ARRANGED THROUGH DIRECT CORRESPONDENCE. CHANCE REQUESTED CONGEN ASSISTANCE IN ARRANGING MEETING WITH DIRECTOR OF CUSTOMS, ATTORNEY GENERAL AND WITH APPROPRIATE STATE OFFICIALS. CHANCE STRONGLY DESIRES HIGH-LEVEL MEETING AND POST'S RECOMMENDATION (CURACAO 280) IN SUPPORT OF SUCH A MEETING REMAINS UNCHANGED. REQUEST DEPT. ARRANGE MEETINGS WITH APPROPRIATE OFFICIALS. OF NOTE WAS CHANCE'S COMMENT THAT HE HAD MET SECRETARY VANCE

AT INAGUARATION CEREMONIES IN SANTO DOMINGO INFORMING THE
SECRETARY OF THE PLANNED VISIT TO WASHINGTON. VISIT TO US
IS STOPOVER ADDED TO PREVIOUSLY PLANNED TRIP TO NETHERLANDS.

5. POST WOULD WELCOME DEPT.'S COMMENTS ON CHANCE'S VISIT, HIS
PROPOSED PATROL BOAT PROGRAM AND INFORMATION ON ANY SCHEDULED
MEETINGS.
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